USING TECHNOLOGY-BASED EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL CHANGE AND NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Any nation that intends to achieve her educational philosophy has the onerous task of taking a critical look and scrutiny at her educational curriculum, which portends the totality of learning experiences, sequence or programme of events that go on in schools at various levels. A society survives when members exhibit sufficient degree of homogeneity, which education perpetuates and reinforces through fixation of essential similarities demanded of collective life to the younger generation. Education achieves this through critical analysis of its curriculum. Technology - based curriculum would pave way for poverty reduction, wealth generation, job creation, skill acquisition, man power development, employment and national transformation. Education through curriculum would inculcate skills that would make individuals reliant, which would yield a restoration of social order. It is within this thematic analysis that society, curriculum and technology are annexed. This paper is of the opinion that technology- based curriculum would occasion social change and national transformation in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Technology; Curriculum; Social Change; National Transformation.

INTRODUCTION:

That society, curriculum and technology are closely related is beyond any reasonable skepticism. Society is defined as a group of people living in a given area in pursuit of common interest. No gain saying that society can only survive if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity. It is also a truism that education perpetuates and reinforces the needed homogeneity by fixing in the child from the onset the essential similarities, which collective life demands. In a complex industrial society formal education serves a function which cannot be provided either by the family or peer group. This is so because membership of society is not based on the principles of family or peer groups. Reflecting on the relationship between education and society Otite and Ogionwo (2006) observe that knowledge and skills acquisition provided by education are basic tools in adaptation and exploration of individuals to social and physical environments.

Curriculum is a veritable agent through which educational policies are achieved. In the planning and development of curriculum, there is need for proper consideration and evaluation of social problems. According to Aggarwal (2006), curriculum should be based on the conditions, problems and needs of society. In this regard, curriculum should provide educational programmes and activities that would offer individuals wholesome participating roles in the society; a participation that is very conducive to the development of responsible citizenship. Curriculum therefore, must be functional in its relation to adult living and concurrently be adapted to the level of development of the child.

Globalization and its attendant information and communication technology are basic characteristics of the 21st century. According to Ominyi (2008) globalization of the world economy is the integration of economies throughout the world through trade, financial flows and exchange of technology, information and the movement of people. No doubt, globalization has occasioned changes in educational pivot role. Developing nations of the world must dance to the tune of globalization or be destroyed by it. One fact is obvious: economic sustenance of developing nations depends very highly on the extents, which such nations imbibe or integrate technological trends into their educational system. The process of integrating technology into class room instructions pre-supposes a technology-based curriculum.

Assessment of extent of achievements of educational objectives in current times must be carried out in line with extent of individual's self-realization. This is also estimated in the context of wealth generation, job creation, poverty reduction, skill acquisition, etc. For education to affect social change and national transformation in contemporary times, it has to integrate technology in its programmes. Computer-based pedagogy would go a long way to produce individuals who are equipped to face the challenges of modernism. Technology-based school curriculum is capable of churning out school leavers who are equipped with skills ready to be relevant in today's world of work. Such curriculum would reduce unemployment and subsequently help in the realization of social order.

Analysis of Basic Concepts:
Technology:

Etymologically speaking, "technology" sources from the Greek word *techne* which means "rational ability to create and produce". Undoubtedly modern technology is the product of ancient *techne*, which through the process of evolution amounted to the development of reasoning and knowledge into science. Technol-

ogy is estimated in terms of human activities resulting from scientific knowledge.

In Greek philosophy, *techne* is always juxtaposed with episteme. The later is Greek equivalence for "knowledge". *Episteme* became related to *techne* in a manner in which "technology" is associated with "science". For Plato, the two concepts are synonymous. Aristotle conceptualizes *techne* as an "art" which translates into "bringing into being", which relates to the activity of contemplation and production. In Aristotlean sense, *techne* is a state of capacity to produce with true logos whereupon logos is a Greek conception for "science", "reason" or "discourse". Technology is the systematic reasoning of practical art itself.

According to Auyang (2004) it is the explicit rendition of reasoning inherent in practical art; the systematic abstraction of essentials in the articulation, generalization, refinement and development of knowledge involved in productive and creative activities. This definition is a reflection of Marx, who previously observed that technology reveals the active relation of man to nature, the direct process of the production of his life and of the mental conceptions that flow from those relations. Technology from the on-going then is "practice", praxis and practical orientation of science (theory) or knowledge.

Curriculum:

The word "curriculum" sources from the Latin word *currere*, which means "to run" or "to run a course". In this perspective, curriculum is conceived as programme of events or totality of activities embarked upon or encountered with the intention of winning a price. Etymological definition of curriculum like most etymological conceptions, do not fully reflect the basic tenets of the concept. Some curriculum theorists have offered more detailed definitions.

Schwab in Aguokogbuo (2005), defines curriculum as what is successfully conveyed to different degrees to differing students by committed teachers using appropriate materials and actions of legitimated bodies of knowledge, skills taste and propensity to act and react, which are chosen for instruction after a series of reflection and communal decision by representatives of those involved in the teaching of a specified group of students, which are known to the decision makers. This definition though lengthy is all-embracing.

In line with above view, Obanya (2004:167) conceives curriculum as a package of what is to be taught and learned and as a process of translating national educational objectives into "within-school do-ables". This definition supports the conception of curriculum as a programme of events transmitted to learners by the school (Ezeani, 2002). According to Offorma (2002:123), curriculum is the planned learning experiences offered to the learner in the school, which basically is made up of three components: programme of students; programme of activities and programme of guidance. This definition acknowledges the role of the school in the assessment of students' activities. Recognizing this role, Aggarwal (2006) also defines curriculum as the sum total of the school's effort to influence learning whether in the classroom, on the playground or out of school.

Viewed from this point, curriculum becomes the environment in motion, involving the totality of experiences that pupils receive in the classroom, library, laboratory, workshop, and playground and in the numerous informal contacts between teachers and pupils. This opinion is enforced by Onwuka (1996), whereupon curriculum is defined as all situations that the school may select and consis-

tently organize for the purpose of bringing about changes in the behaviours of pupils as a means of developing the personality of the individual's society.

Society:

Society is a group of individuals living in a given place bound by common interest. Society refers to human being or people. It goes to delineate what human beings do, the way they relate to one another, the institutions and culture they share and the manner they pass their culture to future generation. Otite and Ogionwo (2006), define society as a unit consisting of institutions and culture, which are exclusive to a group of people. Society then is a network of relationship. As a network of relationship, society is not regarded as a concrete being. Instead, it is regarded as a construct conceived as a heuristic device in sociological studies. As a system of relationship, society denotes a complex of interdependencies first between its parts and its various processes and second, between society itself and its environment. Functionalism as a theory of a society posits a structured perspective of how individuals are expected to behave in a society. Haralambos and Holborn, (2007), identify norms, values and rules as a characteristics features, which regulates behaviours of individual in the society. Karl Marx is concerned with contradiction, conflict, exploitation, oppression, class struggles, change, etc, as they affect the human society. Feminism, interactionism and post modernism are all theories of society.

Social change refers to any significant alteration over time in behaviour patterns, cultural values and norms whereupon "significant" alteration in sociological terms means changes that yield to profound social consequences.

Otite and Ogionwo (2006:229), identified three types of social structures that undergo changes in the society: economic, cultural and regulative structures. The economic refers to the means of life of society, cultural structures relates to the intrinsic ends and values of the society while regulatory structure is associated with the machinery of law, the moral, religious codes, conventions and fashions.

According to Greenwood and Gunner (2008), social change is the shift in the attitudes and behaviours that characterize a society. It is the adaptation to the improvements in a society's technological environment. Greenwood and Gunner (2008) maintain that as a society's production possibilities improve due to technological advance, it becomes in the self interest of some of its citizen to modify their behaviour to take advantage of the new circumstances. Social change therefore is positive change of attitudes towards progress, improvement and better life.

National Transformation:

Transformation as a concept relates to a change in situation, a total departure from previous order to a new order. Afianmagbon and Nwokocha (2012) define national transformation as a process of changing the five institutions of the society: education, economy, politics, religion and culture/ society. National transformation relates to total revolution of a country's socio economic, political, etc, outlook aimed at ensuring the well-being of the individual that make up a nation. Sambo (2012) writes that transformation does not come accidentally but requires deliberate effort. In terms of Ihonvbere (2011), transformation means to reform, refocus, re- design, regenerate, re-organize and reposition institutions, attitude, structures, process, politics and programme in the larger and long- term interest of the majority in society.

Assessment of Nigeria's Current Educational Curriculum.

According to Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004:2), the national educational goals, which derives from the nations philosophy of education include:

A.　The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity.

B.　The inculcation of right type of values attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigeria society.

C.　The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around, and,

D.　The acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

A critical look at the above objectives reveal that Nigeria's educational curriculum is meant to instill national security, unity and communalism among Nigerian people, which would translate to national consciousness patriotism and concern for national development.

Related to this would be the inculcation of acceptable morals, sound behavioral attributes, honesty, sincerity, etc, in the display of one's duties, which would promote egalitarianism, benevolence, freedom, justice and fairness. Furthermore, the nation's educational goals would see inculcation of cognitive skill that would equip an individual for solution of daily problems that might confront man in his natural environment. Such cognitive traits would also equip the individual to confront the circumstance of life. Man's attempt to explore his immediate environment is a reflection that he has integrated in his personality such cognitive skills and abilities. For the individual to survive also he needs to acquire technological skills. As a creative being man is imbued with the task of fashioning out things.

This creative ability is precisely what would enable the individual contribute meaningfully to the society he lives in.

The high level ethico-moral doldrums that seem to exist in the Nigerian society today leaves one wandering whether education has actually achieved its national goals. Admittedly, education should inculcate moral norms into the individuals such that the individual becomes integrated into the social structure and subsequently contribute to the nation's efforts towards achieving a just and egalitarian society. The extent of moral decay prevalent in the nation leaves no one in doubt regarding the failure of education to produce individuals with high morals standards. The unethical behaviours exhibited by the political class, who supposedly has undergone various educational levels buttress the woeful failure of education in Nigeria especially when examined in the context of moral criteria. In support of this seeming assertion, Dike (2007) contends that although corrupts practices have been a recurring decimal in the nation's political history, its rate and dimension since the reprise of civil rule in 1999 is approaching beyond acceptable level in the country. Democracy and good governance owe a lot to education to survive. Durkheim (1963) writes that the primary element of fostering morality is the development of a sense of discipline, which education provides. Judging by the degree of corruption in the nation, it is not a wild claim to say that education has failed in the inculcation of moral principles into the citizens.

In Nigeria's educational philosophy it is believed that: "education fosters the worth and the development of the individual, for each individual's sake and for the general development of the society" (FRN, 2004:1). Human development entails that an individual achieves acceptable psycho-social personality. This would enable him harmonize internal crisis and conflict inherent in him.

Inability of an individual to come to terms with internal conflict results in the external violence and social unrest, which is seen at the larger society. Terrorism, violence, defiance, suicide bombings, etc, are all extension or external manifestation of improper formation of the self. As Ben (1981:118) puts it: "a person's self is the sum total of all that he calls his, a person's total subjective environmental and the distinctive centre of experience and significance". Self then; provides stability and equilibrium in the human person.

The failure of education to assist the individual to properly form his "self and adjust reasonably to challenges of life is the root causes of violence and insecurity witnessed across the nation. The development of one's potentials and attributes launches the individual to the society in which he belongs and ascribes to the individual certain decrees of dignity, self-respect, recognition and equality to other members of the society. This is what is known as education for self-reliance. It is not an over-statement that current Nigerian's educational curriculum has not achieved much in this regard.

Limitations of Current Nigeria's Educational Curriculum:

From the on- going it could be deduced that current Nigeria's educational curriculum has not been able to actually inculcate self-reliant skills into school leavers. This accounts for high rate of unemployment in the nation's labour sector. It suffices to say that emphasis is laid on formal schooling rather that education, which encapsulated inculcation of moral principles, psycho-social characteristics, technical traits and overall well -being of individual for survival in the society and the world of work. Contemporary educational curriculum has failed to equip school leavers with relevant self-reliant skills either in art and crafts for self-employment. Sustainable development in Nigeria, no doubt, requires availability of competent human resources. In its educational philosophy, Nigerian had hoped that, using education as a tool, she could produce manpower that would serve in different capacities and contribute positively to national development.

Against this expectation, many Nigerian graduates today are unemployed, while those who are fortunate to be integrated into the labour force are miserably under employed. Ominyi (2008), remarks that there is a mismatch between what is taught in our educational institutions and the demands of the labour markets. According to Taiwo (2003) globalization, which refers to liberalization, internationalization and intensification of international linkages in trade, finance, markets, production, research, transformation, medicine, education, politics and culture has posited serious challenges to Nigerian education. Not much has been done to position our graduate at par with global effects. As a result, we currently see graduates that cannot fit into the current global markets.

Current educational curriculum has not been able to inculcate relevant moral traits that would enable school leavers and graduate to behave positively in both social and political lives. Iheoma (2006) regrets that current approaches to moral education in Nigerian schools, have been examined and considered inadequate to cope with the contemporary moral crises. Technology-based educational curriculum would adopt consequentiality and integrated methodology in the area of moral education in school. Thomas Hobbes in his Social Contract describes man in the "state of nature" as basing his existence on the survival of the fittest. This could be likened to the current political game in Nigeria. Sound educational standard would produce sound individuals with good human relationship ready to sustain good governance if elected in political positions.

Technology-based Educational Curriculum: Imperatives for Social Change and National Transformation in Nigeria.

While considering the various contentions regarding the concept of curriculum, with particular reference to this paper, curriculum refers to totality of learning experiences, programmes of events as well as subject areas which the learner is meant to undertake within the period of schooling. It also relates to the aggregate of activities, planned events and programmed subject matter that are required for a student or learner to graduate from a given level of learning. Technology-based educational curriculum then refers to school programme and planned learning experience that are practically oriented. It is a progressive curriculum that is pivoted on inculcation of self-reliant skills. Technology -based learning integrate use of software, multimedia, internet and distance learning aimed at equipping learners with the practical knowledge to leverage these technology to improve the way student learn, think and create.

Computer-Based pedagogy equips students with problem-solving skills that would enable them confront daily problems. Newer technology-based instructional strategies incorporating the internet and the World Wide Web (WWW) are used more to expand communication and increase access to resources. The newer technologies represent a significant change in the teacher's role in the instructional process. Whereas earlier technologies provided teachers primarily with a tool for continuing to teach in the manner they were already teaching, though personally, more efficient technologies such as e-mail and internet tend to push teachers toward different ways of teaching. Depending on utilization, these techniques shift more responsibility to the students to seek out information and interact with people at other locations. Fundamentally they tend to encourage more student-centered learning. This, in turn put pressures on teachers to modify their approach to classroom teaching.

Technology-based curriculum entails a more practical approach to teaching and learning. It encourages creative teaching and learning. This teaching approach is diametrically opposed to the orthodox and traditional approach that presents learners as passive agents in the teaching-learning process. Using computer to teach all subjects in school inculcates in learners creative and manipulative traits. Again it engineers learners towards development of positive attitudes towards the possibilities and challenges of life. This is because computer-based learning reinvigorates manipulative and inquiry-based attitude to learning.

Apart from use of computer, technology-based curriculum relates to the dominance of practice against theory in learning. Teaching of school subjects is to focus on the translation of high level abstraction to concrete realities whereupon learners are to actually see the real life implications of whatever theory and concept taught in class. Practical approach to teaching enables individuals to attain self-realization. It will make individuals to discover their inner potentials and talents therefore, engaging meaningfully in the society they live. No gain saying that education is the instrument of change. This change is both internal and external. Internally, it transforms the individual from barbarism to life of enlightenment and decency. No wander Plato prefers to adopt the etymological concepts of education as educere, "to lead out". The external transformation that education engages in relates to the society, which concern the attitudinal changes occasioned by education.

Education is an instrument of social change and re-construction Ezeani (2002) defines social change as the modifications in the organization and behaviour of the group expressed in its laws, institutions, customs, modes and beliefs. When change is for the better it becomes progressive and essentially, evolutionary. Social change could be social, economic, political, religious, scientific and technological. Education transforms the society positively and this, it does through its curriculum. Here lies the connection between society and curriculum. This transformative role of education is made much easier if its curriculum is technology-based. It is within this thematic analysis that society, curriculum and technology are annexed. Technology-based curriculum would go a long way to help in production of students and school learners who would be meaningfully engaged in vocational or occupational jobs to eke out their living. In this way, living standards of individuals that make up the Nigerian society becomes improved. Practical approach to teaching would inculcate occupational skills into school leavers. This is a positive step towards job creation, poverty reduction, and unemployment and wealth generation. This is the economic perspective of social change.

Autonomy principle propagates that human beings are autonomous agents and should be treated as such. Gillon (1986) defines autonomy as the capacity to think, decide and act on the basis of such thought and decision freely and independently without let or hindrance. Deriving from Kant, autonomy principle projects human beings as ends in themselves and not means to an end. Humans therefore are sacred beings with dignity and value. Exploitations, dehumanization, poverty, slavery, etc, that seem to characterize our society today portends the seeming failure of education to uphold and sustain the dignity of man. Technology-based educational curriculum would instill in individuals and school leavers the tendency and desire to work since man realizes his essence through work and labour. In this way, individuals qualify as social beings that are socially fitted in the society. Theory-oriented educational curriculum and pedagogy are responsible for high rate of defiance, miscreance, unemployment, thuggery, etc, in the Nigerian society.

Taiwo (2013) writes that emphasis on paper certificate sustained by rote learning in the Nigerian institutions of learning is to blame for high rate of joblessness in Nigeria. President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria recognized the limitations of current educational curriculum especially as it relates to job creation when he called for reforms in the school curriculum in his transformation Agenda. In the conceptions of Usman, Ibrahim and Salihu (2013), government is committed to pursing certain policy measures to reinvigorate various sectors of economy and enhance their employment generating potentials, including implementing a youth employment safety net support programme that includes conditional cash transfer and vocational training, review of University curricula to align with industry job requirements and promotion of apprenticeship/work experience, etc.

Implementation of this aspect of the transformation agenda will ensure national development. In other words, technology-based curriculum initiative is in consonance with transformation agenda and its implementation is a social change itself. Apart from the economic social change, technology-based curriculum will also sustain political, social, ethical and religious positive changes. In the first place, creative teaching-learning approach would develop sound attitudes in learners. Consequently, this would translate into sound value judgment in citizens. The products of qualitative education are social stability, balanced personality on the part of the individual, social solidarity value consensus, division of labour, religious tolerance, political order, etc. These are necessary ingredients for national transformation.

National transformation as contained in the transformation agenda cuts across efficiency in macro economics and economic direction, public expenditure, governance, justice and judiciary, foreign policy and economic diplomacy, legislative, health sector, labour and productivity; infrastructural development, power, Niger Delta and transportation (FRN, 2013).

Technology-based educational curriculum would instill qualitative education in Nigeria. Qualitative education is one that is capable of producing school leavers that would be self-reliant. According to UNICEF (2000:2), quality education includes:

a. Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities.

b. Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and agenda-sensitive; and provide adequate resources and facilities.

c. Content that is reflected in relevant curriculum and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the area of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace.

d. Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities;

e. Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

It is pertinent to note that technology-based educational curriculum cannot be implemented unless there is improved educational funding, training and re-training of technology-based teachers. It also demands knowledge-based educational managers and administrators.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Technology is very vital to the development of any society and technology-based educational curriculum would sustain social change and advance national transformation.

It is therefore recommended that:

(1) Developing countries of the world should be assisted by the developed nations to step up access to scientific expertise, information technology especially in the areas of energy, man power, and technical know-how.

(2) Educational curriculum at all levels of learning in Nigeria should be child-centred.

(3) Federal Government of Nigeria should make computer education a compulsory course in all levels of learning in the country.

(4) Educational management and administration in the country should be knowledge-based.

(5) There is need to recruit computer literate teachers, lecturers, etc, in the respective areas of higher and lower learning while in- service computer trainings should be organized for those already in service.

CONCLUSION:

This paper has attempted to establish a connection between society, curriculum and technology. Human beings live in their societies through exploration of their environments. Technology is as old as man himself. From time man has always device means of producing things using primitive tools. Modern technology, computer, for instance, has fostered man's ability to conquer the things of nature. Modern man has also made efforts towards application of scientific knowledge into practice. Education is an instrument of social change. Curriculum is a veritable instrument of education. Education takes place in the society. It is also at the service of the society. Technology introduces the required practical skills needed by man to live in the society and contribute meaningfully to national development. It is within this thematic analysis that society, sustainable curriculum and technology are annexed.

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